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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 THE HAGUE 000156

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR CA/OCS, DS/IP/EUR, EUR/WE, DSCC

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TAGS: [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [EAIR](#) [NL](#)
SUBJECT: Follow up on Turkish Airlines Plane Crash

Ref: Ref: (A) AMSTERDAM 00027, (B) AMSTERDAM 00026,
(C) THE HAGUE 00148, (D) THE HAGUE 00145,
(E) THE HAGUE 00140, (F) THE HAGUE 00136

¶1. (U) Post is not submitting regular sitreps on the situation surrounding the February 25 crash of Turkish Airlines Flight No. 1951, reporting instead on developments as needed.

¶2. (SBU) Summary: A memorial service, to be attended by the Charge and Consul General, will be held March 7 at Schiphol Airport. Contact with American citizens involved in the accident continues. Turkish Airlines issued a press release providing information on compensation to crash victims and their families. End Summary.

PASSENGER COMPENSATION

¶3. (SBU) Turkish Airlines issued a March 3 press release from Istanbul offering to make the following advance payments, without prejudice:

- an initial non-refundable payment of 5,000 euros to any surviving passenger for immediate economic needs;
- a payment of 10,000 euros for passengers hospitalized in excess of three days; and
- a payment of 50,000 euros per passenger to deceased passengers' family members who are entitled to claim compensation.

The airline refers all questions to its attorneys: Kunt & Ort (Istanbul - for passengers residing in Turkey) and Allen & Overy (Amsterdam - for all passengers residing outside of Turkey). The Consulate General staff has conveyed this information to the victims and their families.

MEMORIAL SERVICES

¶4. (SBU) The Dutch government will hold a memorial service for the crash victims on March 7 at Schiphol Airport. The next of kin of the four AmCit crash fatalities were supportive of having a memorial service, as were Mr. Ledford, the family of Mr. Hemmer, and the AmCit mother of a crash victim (Mrs. Fatma Nur Cicekdag). Post has not been in touch with Mr. Dagesan, who is currently in Turkey. The Mission will be represented by the Charge d'affaires and the Consul General. Charge has been asked to provide brief remarks. The Consulate General staff solicited suggestions from the families of the AmCit victims and passed them on to the Dutch authorities. It is unlikely AmCits besides Mr. Ledford will attend. The Turkish Embassy had sent a letter to local Dutch authorities suggesting it might be too soon for Turkish victims of the crash to return to the Netherlands for such a memorial service and informed the Dutch Turkish Airlines had held a service in Istanbul on February 28. We do not yet know what the level of Turkish representation will be at the service.

15. (SBU) Consulate officials also coordinated efforts involving the MFA and Dutch Embassy in Washington for officials to attend services in the United States for victims. The Dutch honorary consul in Seattle, Mr. Hageman, attended a March 4 private church service in Kent, Washington, in honor of Mr. Salman. Mr. Visser, the honorary consul in Houston, is expected to attend the March 5 remembrance ceremony in honor of Mr. Crognale organized by Shell.

ASSISTANCE TO AMERICAN CITIZENS

16. (SBU) Michael Hemmer continues to improve at the Free University Medical Center in Amsterdam (VUMC). Larry Hemmer, Mr. Hemmer's brother, informed Conoff that VUMC doctors removed Mr. Hemmer from machine-assisted respiration on March 3, 2008 after they determined that he had recovered sufficiently to breathe on his own. Larry, a physician with over 25 years of experience, added that Mr. Hemmer had "broken every long bone in his body" but nonetheless was healing quickly. Larry said that VUMC doctors are monitoring Mr. Hemmer's left ankle, which is infected. VUMC doctors are apparently reluctant to reset the broken bones in Mr. Hemmer's ankle until the swelling subsides, which Larry speculated may take several days.

17. Conoff passed information to Shirley Hemmer, Mr. Hemmer's wife, regarding the March 7 memorial ceremony. Neither Mrs. Hemmer nor Larry Hemmer plans to attend. Conoff also provided Turkish Airlines' press release regarding advance compensation to hospitalized victims of the crash, as well as a list of attorneys in The Netherlands.

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18. Conoff passed information to Ronald Ledford regarding Turkish Airlines' advance compensation to survivors of the crash and a list of attorneys in The Netherlands. Conoff separately informed Mr. Ledford about the March 7 memorial ceremony, which Mr. Ledford plans to attend.

GALLAGHER